

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5440
INFO AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY BUJUMBURA
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

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JOINT STATE /AID/USIA/PC

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PFOR, EAGR, RW, MILI
SUBJECT: TRENDS IN RWANDA: OCTOBER 1977

1. SUMMARY. ONCE GAIN, DEVELOPMENT, DEVELOPMENT, DEVELOPMENT
.... BUT LATELY WITH UNDERCURRENT OF WORRY ABOUT RESTIVE ARMY
OFFICERS. AT ARMED FORCES DAY CEREMONIES, PRESIDENT PRAISED ARMY'S
CONTRIBUTION TO DEVELOPMENT YET ALSO VENTED ANGER OVER RECENT
INCIDENTS OF "INDISCIPLINE" AMONG OFFICERS. HABYARIMANA ALSO CALLED
UPON TWO CIVILIAN ELITES, FOREIGN TECHNICAL EXPERTS AND RWANDAN
CATHOLIC PRIESTS, TO INCREASE THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS. TAKING A LONGER-
TERM VIEW OF DEVELOPMENT HABYARIMANA EXAMINED WITH PAPAL NUNCIO
"ACCEPTABLE" METHODS TO LIMIT RWANDA'S WORRISOME BIRTH RATE.
END SUMMARY.

2. ARMED FORCES DAY: RUMBLINGS OF UNREST?

ANNUAL OCTOBER 26 MILITARY CELEBRATIONS GAVE PRESIDENT
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HABYARIMANA OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE ANOTHER OF HIS THOUGHTFUL, REFLECTIVE
(IF LESS THAN CROWD-ROUSING) SPEECHES. MAIN THEME THIS TIME WAS
WORRISOM: INDISCIPLINE IN ARMY RANKS. BUT PRESIDENT ALSO TOUCHED
ON MILITARY'S POSITIVE NATION-BUILDING ROLE, ON PROBLEMS OF DISAR-
MAMENT, AND ON IMPROVING RELATIONS WITH CENTRAL AND EAST AFRICAN
NEIGHBORS:

-- INDISCIPLINE. HABYARIMAN'S REMARKS WERE ONE OF THOSE RARE HINTS OF WHAT GOES ON IN IMPENETRABLE POLITICAL MAZE HERE. WE HAD HEARD RUMORS OF CLASHES BETWEEN GARRISONS AT GISENYI AND RUHENGERI, AND WE KNOW THAT KEY MEMBER OF PRESIDENT'S MILITARY HOUSEHOLD WAS DEMOTED. REMARKS SUGGESTED PROBLEMS WERE WIDER SPREAD, HOWEVER, WE EVEN HEARD RUMORS OF AN ABORTED COUP. AS HE BERATED "THOSE WHO BELIEVE INCREASING WEIGHT OF STARS ON THEIR SHOULDERS MEANS LESS DISCIPLINE AND LESS RESPONSIBILITY", PRESIDENT IMPLIED THAT OFFICERS THEMSELVES--NOT THEIR TROOPS--WERE THE SOURCE OF HIS WORRIES. UNFORTUNATELY, AS IN PLATO'S CAVE, SPEECH SHOWED US NO MORE THAN SHADOWS ON RWANDAN WALL.

-- NATION-BUILDING. ON POSITIVE SIDE, PRESIDENT LAUDED ARMY'S GROWING DEVELOPMENTAL ROLE. MILITARY PARADE HAD BEEN LED BY SUCCESSIVE

SQUADS SHOWING OFF FRUITS OF "UMUGANDA" LABORS: PIGS, RABBITS, DUCKS, GRAINS, BLACKSMITHING, ETC., AND PRESIDENT INVITED ONE AND ALL TO TOUR MILITARY CAMPS AND SEE THESE ACTIVITIES FIRST-HAND. HABYARIMANA SINGLED OUT ARMY'S WORK IN REHABILITATING DROP-OUT YOUTH FOR SPECIAL PRAISE (EMBASSY SH FUNDS HELPED FINANCE ONE SUCH PROJECT). AND HE CALLED ON FOREIGN DONORS TO GIVE SPECIAL ATTENTION TO FINANCING ARMY'S DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS OF THIS SORT.

--DISARMAMENT. RWANDA IS PEACE-LOVING NATION, PRESIDENT SAID, AND SIDES FIRMLY WITH THOSE WHO SEEK UNIVERSAL DISARMAMENT. CHIEF ROLE

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ITS SECURITY FORCES IS TO ENSURE RWANDA CAN DEVELOP ECONOMICALLY IN PEACEFUL ATMOSPHERE. BUT TODAY'S "ARMED PEACE" MEANS THAT ARMS ARE NECESSARY TO ENSURE WAR DOES NOT OCCUR. MEANWHILE, TRUE DISARMAMENT SEEMS FURTHER OFF THAN EVER, AS SUPER-POWERS MULTIPLY THEIR WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION; AS STRATEGIC ARMS NEGOTIATIONS CONTINUE TO FALTER; AS NUCLEAR POWER PLANTS CONTINUE TO BE BUILT FOR DUBIOUS PURPOSES; AND AS MAJOR NATIONS CONTINUE TO DEVOTE ENORMOUS SUMS TO ARMS INDUSTRY. HOW, HE ASKED, CAN SMALL NATIONS LIKE RWANDA HOPE TO ESCAPE THESE IRRESISTIBLE CURRENTS?

-- CENTRAL AFRICAN RELATIONS. ONCE AGAIN, HABYARIMANA BERATED ANCIEN KAYIBANDA REGIME FOR IMPOSING ISOLATION ON RWANDA, AND HE BOASTED OF RELAXED TENSIONS AND FLOURISHING DEVELOPMENTAL RELATIONS WITH BURUNDI, ZAIRE, UGANDA, AND TANZANIA. (RWANDANS EVEN WENT SO FAR AS TO "PERMIT" UGANDAN ARMY TEAM TO WIN MAJOR SOCCER MATCH LATER IN DAY.)

COMMENT: IMPOSSIBLE FOR US JUDGE YET HOW SERIOUS HABYARIMANA'S DISCIPLINE PROBLEM IS. WE KNOW SOME OFFICERS FAULT HIM FOR PAYING TOO MUCH ATTENTION TO NATION-BUILDING, UMUGANDA, AND PEACEFUL RELATIONS WITH NEIGHBORS. BUT PRESIDENT SHOWED NO SIGN OF FALTERING IN THESE EFFORTS: HE WANTS A STRONG ARMY, BUT HE WANTS

IT ENLISTED FULLY IN DEVELOPMENT TASK. A STERN WARNING, BOTH FOR ARMY OFFICERS AND FOR US DEVELOPMENTALISTS.

3. PRESIDENT TRIES TO GET ALL ON DEVELOPMENT BANDWAGON

IN OCTOBER, PRESIDENT HABYARIMANA REVEALED HIS CONCERN THAT GOR'S MOBILIZATION FOR DEVELOPMENT ORGANS, UMUGANDA (COMMUNAL LABOR PROGRAM) AND THE MRND, ARE NOT ACHIEVING THEIR DEVELOPMENT GOALS. ON OCTOBER 9 HE APPARENTLY DECIDED THAT THE TIME HAD COME TO MUSTER SUPPORT OF TWO PRESTIGIOUS GROUPS, EXPATRIATE DEVELOPMENT EXPERTS AND RWANDAN CATHOLIC PRIESTS, TO GET THINGS MOVING AGAIN.

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ACTION AF-10

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PRESIDENT SEIZED OCCASION OF MEETING WITH PAPAL NUNCIO ON FAMILY PLANING TO ANNOUNCE THAT HE EXPECTED A GREATER CONTRIBUTION FROM THESE TWO GROUPS. HABYARIMANA REPORTEDLY SAID (WIOH UNCHARACTERISTIC SHARPNESS) THAT HE WOULD EXPEL FOREIGN TECHNICIANS IF THEY DID NOT FIND

A WAY TO SUPPORT UMUGANDA. ACCORDING TO GOVERNMENT PRESS, PRESIDENT SUGGESTED FOREIGN TECHNICIANS SUPERVISE UMUGANDA ACTIVITIES OR GO TO THEIR OWN PROJECT SITES ON SATURDAY MORNINGS TO REVIEW WEEKLY PROGRESS.

HABYARIMANA'S REQUEST REFLECTS HOPE THAT PRESENCE OF EXPATRIATES AT UMUGANDA SITES OR KNOWLEDGE THAT EXPATRIATES ARE WORKING

SATURDAYS WILL BOOST RWANDANS' WILLINGNESS TO PERFORM UMUGANDA. SINCE UMUGANDA IS WIDELY CRITICIZED FOR INEFFICIENT HANDLING OF

MANPOWER, QUALIFIED MANAGERS MIGHT ADD DEGREE OF RATIONALIZATION AND CHANGE "MAKE-WORK" IMAGE. HOWEVER, MERE PRESENCE OF EXPATRIATES WILL NOT SOLVE UGANDA'S PROBLEM OF INEQUITY. SALARIED WHITE COLLAR WORKERS CONSIDER MANUAL LABOR DEGRADING AND LIMIT THEIR PARTICIPATION ACCORDINGLY, EVEN THOUGH UGANDA IS INCLUDED IN THEIR REGULAR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WORK WEEK. FARMERS AND OTHER NON-SALARIED WORKERS HAVE EVEN LESS MOTIVATION SINCE THEY LOSE INCOME BY BEING REQUIRED TO LEAVE THEIR FIELDS UNATTENDED TO TRAVEL (SOMETIMES SUBSTANTIAL DISTANCES) TO UGANDA SITES.

ACCORDING TO GOVERNMENT PRESS ACCOUNTS, PRESIDENT ADMONISHED HIS SECOND TARGET GROUP, RWANDAN CATHOLIC PRIESTS, FOR FAILING TO SUPPORT THE MRND AND "STIMULATE THE PEOPLE TO DEVELOPMENT IN COORDINATION WITH CIVIL AUTHORITIES." TWO DAYS LATER, WHILE MEETING WITH DELEGATION OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS SEEKING REDRESS, HABYARIMANA REPORTEDLY

(GOVERNMENT PRESS) ACKNOWLEDGED THE "MERITORIOUS ACTIONS OF A GREAT NUMBER OF PRIESTS WORKING FOR DEVELOPMENT," YET AGAIN CRITICIZED THOSE REPRESENTATIVE (THIS TIME OF ALL RELIGIOUS COMMUNITIES) WHO FAILED TO ASSIST THE GOVERNMENT'S DEVELOPMENT DRIVE. IN AN OVERWHELMINGLY CATHOLIC COUNTRY SUCH AS RWANDA, A MORE ACTIVE ROLE BY PRIESTS COULD BOOST THE LEGITIMACY OF UGANDA AND THE MRND IN PEOPLE'S EYES.

4. GOR GRAPPLES WITH DEMOGRAPHIC WORRIES

TWICE IN A THREE WEEK PERIOD PRESIDENT HABYARIMANA AND PAPAL NUNCIO DISCUSSED RWANDA'S DEMOGRAPHIC PROBLEMS. IN OCT 9 MEETING WITH NUNCIO, HABYARIMANA AVOWED THAT HE WAS "EXTREMELY INTERESTED" IN FINDING AN EFFECTIVE BIRTH CONTROL METHOD THAT IS ACCEPTABLE TO THE VATICAN. HE ALSO GAVE INSTRUCTIONS THAT "APPROVED NATURAL METHODS" OF FAMILY PLANNING BE PUBLICIZED IN LOCAL MEDIA. NUNCIO REPORTS THAT HABYARIMANA EAGER TO PUT "BILLINGS METHOD" OF BIRTH CONTROL TO TEST. ALONG THESE LINES, "BILLINGS METHOD" WILL BE GIVEN FULL SCALE TRYOUT AT A GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED PILOT FAMILY PLANNING CENTER AND AT A CATHOLIC MISSION HEALTH DISPENSARY.

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5. DRAFTER: POL/BRENNAN: AMB.
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